the first user, the digital information block being reviewable by a plurality of second users, comprising:

generating second information blocks responsive to the first digital information block, each of the second digital information blocks corresponding to a respective one of the second users, each of the second digital information blocks including price information established by a respective one of the second users, and all of the second digital information blocks being arranged in an order established by the second users;

selecting one of the second digital information blocks based on the price information, the selecting being performed by the first user; and

receiving the first digital information block, the receiving being performed by the selected one of the second users of the respective second digital information block selected by the first user.--

--20. A method for operating a computer system including a buffer memory accessible by a plurality of first users and a plurality of second users and storing first digital information blocks generated by the first users, the digital information block being reviewable by the second users, comprising:

generating second information blocks responsive to at least one of the first digital information blocks, each of the second digital information blocks corresponding to a respective one of the second users, each of the second digital information blocks including price information established by a respective one of the second users, and all of the second digital information blocks being arranged in an order established by the second users;

selecting one of the second digital information blocks based on the price information, the selecting being performed by the selecting one of the first users; and

receiving the first digital information block, the receiving being performed by the selected one of the second users of the respective second digital information block selected by the selected one of the first users.--

--21. A method for operating a computer system including a buffer memory accessible by a buyer and a plurality of sellers and storing a request for proposal (RFP) and an associated work order generated by the buyer, the RFP being reviewable by the sellers, comprising:

generating proposals responsive to the RFP, each of the proposals corresponding to a respective one of the sellers, each of the proposals including price information established by a respective one of the sellers, and all of the proposals being arranged in an order established collectively by the sellers;

selecting one of the proposals based on the price information, the selecting being performed by the buyer; and

receiving the work order, the receiving being performed by the selected one of the sellers of the respective proposal selected by the buyer.--

--22. A method for operating a computer system including a buffer memory accessible by a plurality of buyers and a plurality of sellers and storing a request for proposal (RFP) and an associated work order generated by each respective buyer, the RFP being reviewable by all of the sellers, comprising:

generating proposals responsive to a respective RFP, each of the proposals corresponding to a respective one of the sellers, each of the proposals including price information established by a respective one of the sellers, and all of the proposals being arranged in an order established collectively by the sellers;

selecting one of the proposals based on the price information, the selecting being performed by one of the buyers; and

receiving the work order associated with the selected RFP, the receiving being performed by the selected one of the sellers of the respective proposal selected by the one of the buyers.--

--23. A method for operating a computer system including a buffer memory accessible by a buyer and a plurality of sellers and storing a work order summary and an associated work order generated by the buyer, the work order summary being reviewable by all of the sellers, and the work order summary including price information established by the buyer, comprising:

selecting the work order summary based on the price information, the selecting being performed by one of the sellers;

receiving the work order, the receiving being performed by the selecting one of the sellers; and

removing the received work order summary and the associated work order from the buffer memory.--

--24. A method for operating a computer system including a buffer memory accessible by a plurality of buyers and a plurality of sellers and storing a plurality of work order summaries and associated work orders generated by the buyers, the work order summaries being reviewable by the sellers, and each work order summary including price information established by a respective buyer, comprising:

selecting one of the work order summaries based on the price information, the selecting being performed by one of the sellers;

receiving the work order, the receiving being performed by the selecting one of the sellers; and

removing the selected work order summary and the associated work order from the buffer memory.--

--25. A combination comprising:

a first record medium for storing computer readable instructions for permitting a first computer to store a plurality of first work order packages corresponding to respective first users, to

-4-

store a plurality of second work order packages corresponding to respective second users, to arrange the first work order packages in a first order established by all of the first users, to arrange the second work order packages in a second order established by all of the second users, to download a first work order corresponding to one of the first work order packages to any requesting one of a plurality of third users based on the order established by the first users, and to download a second work order corresponding to one of the second work order packages to one of the third users selected by one of the second users;

a second record medium for storing computer readable instruction for permitting a second computer to: generate at least one of the first and the second work order packages, each generated work order package including a work order summary and a work order; and monitor a relative position of a selected one of the first and second work order packages and for instructing the first computer to modify the respective work order summary in the selected one of the first and second work order packages to thereby move the modified work order package to a new position in one of the orders established by the first and the second users; and

a third record medium for storing computer readable instructions for permitting a third computer to download the requested one of the first and the second work order packages. --

--26. The combination as recited in claim 25, wherein the first and the second work order packages each include an indicia of the priority a respective one of the first and the second users attaches to processing of respective first and second work order packages by the third users.--

--27. The combination as recited in claim 28, wherein the machine readable instructions for instructing the first computer to move the selected one of the first and second work order packages to the new position in one of the orders established by the first and second users comprises changing the indicia in the first and the second work order packages.--

-5-

--28. The combination as recited in claim 25, wherein the instructions in the third storage medium permit any respective work order summary to be displayed on the third computer.--

--29. A system for transmitting, storing, retransmitting and receiving a plurality of work order packages, each containing a work order summary having an indicia of the priority attached to one of the work order packages by a respective requester and a work order, the system comprising:

    a first computer system including:

        - a first memory storing a first software module containing first operating instructions readable by the first computer system;

        - an input device for generating at least one of the work order packages and for changing one of the indicia in the respective one of the work order packages generated by the respective requester; and

        - a first display for monitoring all of the work order packages;

    a first communications channel receiving any of the work order packages generated by the first computer system;

    a second computer system receiving the at least one of the work order packages from the first communications channel and parsing received work order packages into their respective work order summaries and work orders, the second computer system including:

        - a second memory storing a second software module containing second operating instructions readable by the second computer system;

        - a summary storage memory for storing the work order summaries linked to the respective work orders in a predetermined order based on the indicia in the respective work order packages; and

    a bulk storage memory for storing the respective work orders;

-6-

a second communications channel for receiving the respective work order summaries and a selected one of the work orders from the summary storage memory and the bulk storage memory, respectively; and

a third computer system for selecting the selected one of the respective work orders based on the work order summaries and for receiving the selected one of the work orders, the third computer comprising:

- a third memory storing a third software module containing third operation instructions readable by the third computer; and

- a second display for displaying any of the work order summaries and the selected one of the work orders;

wherein the second computer system, under control of the second operating instructions, reorders all of the stored work order summaries responsive to any change in the indicia of the work order packages generated by the respective requester.--

Cont'd
on
pl

SUB E?7   --30. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein the second communications channel comprises:

a low speed communications channel for instructing the second computer system to download and of the work order summaries to the third computer system; and

a high speed communications channel for downloading the selected one of the work orders from the second computer system to the third computer system.--

SUB D57   --31. The system as recited in claim 29, wherein the third computer system comprises a plurality of third computers, and wherein the summary storage memory comprises a first storage memory accessible by all of the third computers and a second storage memory having a plurality of partitions, each of the partitions being accessible by only a selected one of the third computers.--

SUBE10

--32. The system as recited in claim 31, wherein a one-to-one correspondence between the partitions and a subset of the third computers is established by respective passwords.--

33. A method for operating a computer system including a buffer memory storing a plurality of work order packages awaiting acceptance by a supplier of one of goods and services, each of the work order packages having an associated priority indicia assigned by a respective user, the method comprising steps for:

    storing a user's work order package among the plurality of work order packages;

    monitoring a rate of change of position of the user's work order package relative to the plurality of work order packages to thereby determine velocity through the buffer memory to the supplier; and

    when the velocity is unacceptable to the user, changing the priority indicia in the user's work order package so as to instruct the computer system to reorder the plurality of work order packages based on the priority indicia and thereby adjust the velocity of the user's work order package through the buffer memory.--

--34. The method as recited in claim 33, wherein the priority indicia correspond to a price bid by the user to the supplier for requested one of the goods and services.--

SUB 307

--35. A remote access system for purchasing services, comprising:

    a first facility for storing work order packages, each work order package generated by a respective originator and including a work order and an associated work order summary in a remotely accessible data storage device, to thereby provide a remotely accessible work order database comprised of the stored work order packages;

    a plurality of second facilities remote from the first facility, but in electronic communication therewith, for providing a pool of participating service providers with access to the work order database; and

means for facilitating interactive bidding by the originators of the work order packages and service providers regarding the fees to be charged by the participating service providers for the services requested in the work order packages,

whereby the system functions as an open electronic marketplace for the distribution of services to the originators, and

wherein the system is configured in such a manner as to enable any one or more of the service providers to select and extract one or more of the work orders from the work order database in accordance with selection criteria established by the service providers and the work order package originators.--

--36. A method for operating a computer system including a buffer memory storing a plurality of work order packages awaiting acceptance by a service provider, each of the work order packages having an associated priority indicia assigned by a respective user, the method comprising steps for:

monitoring a rate of change of position of the user's work order package relative to the plurality of work order packages;

estimating a velocity through the buffer memory to the service provider; and

when the velocity is unacceptable to the user, changing the priority indicia in the user's work order package so as to instruct the computer system to reorder the plurality of work order packages based on the priority indicia and thereby increase the velocity of the user's work order package through the plurality of work order packages.--

--37. The method as recited in claim 36, wherein the priority indicia correspond to a price bid by the user to the service provider for the requested service.--